

**REMARKS**

Applicant and Applicant's Attorney, Robert H. Bachman, thanks the Examiner for the courtesy of the interview held on November 14, 2007 wherein this case was discussed. This amendment includes the points raised at the interview.

This is in response to the Official Action of July 3, 2007, with a two (2) month extension requested. This amendment is believed to positively respond to all objections now raised by the Examiner and place the case in condition for allowance.

In accordance with the instant amendment, the features of claim 125 have been added to the generic claim. Thus the generic claim now specifies "at least one of said first portion and said second portion of said at least one of said spokes is coupled to at least one of said outer flange and said rim by means of an interference fit". Applicant respectfully submits that the applied art does not at all teach or suggest applicant's combination of features, particularly including the claimed features of an interference fit.

Wilson clearly does not anticipate the applicant's combination of features, particularly including applicant's interference fit between the spoke and the cavity.

During the time of the Wilson reference, it was a common construction technique to screw the spokes of a vehicle wheel directly into its corresponding pre-threaded hole in the hub flange. There are numerous references that can provide support for this. This common technology of the time employed a pre-threaded hole, into which the spoke was threadably fastened. This was the current state of the art of the day and there is no reason to think that Wilson would have employed a

different system. Such a common threaded engagement does not constitute a self-tapping or interference fit or a deformed engagement as described in the present invention.

Further, if Wilson had indeed contemplated a self-tapping, deformed, or interference fit to provide the connection between his hub flange and spoke, this would have been a sufficiently novel departure from current technology to warrant inclusion in the Wilson reference. But such a concept of an interference fit or deformed connection is not discussed anywhere in the Wilson reference.

Wilson does mention that his hub flange does not have a "tendency to split" (page 1, line 88) in reference to its connection to the spokes. However, such a "tendency to split" would likely be caused by a wide range of forces that are experienced by a vehicle wheel during operation and does not, in itself, indicate an interference fit between the spoke and the hub flange. For example, deflection of the spoke due to lateral loads during operation of the wheel could induce the spoke to pry apart the hub flange. Or else, compressive loads on the spoke (loads that tend to drive the spoke deeper into the flange) during operation could serve to wedge or split the hub flange apart.

Still further, Wilson's alternative embodiment (Wilson's FIG. 5) utilizes a metallic or steel hub flange. Due to the high hardness of the steel flange, it would be impossible to create a deformed connection with a steel spoke of similar hardness. If Wilson had contemplated a deformed connection in his vulcanized fiber embodiment, the steel flange embodiment would be a significant departure in this regard. In his discussion of this alternative embodiment, Wilson makes no reference to a self-tapping, interference, or deformed connection, nor does he mention this as a factor in comparison with his preferred embodiment (Wilson's FIGS. 2-3).

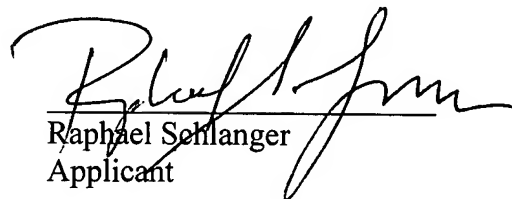
In view of the foregoing, it is courteously urged that Wilson does not at all teach or suggest the specifically defined features of the applicant's amended claims.

Similarly, neither Lacombe et al nor Watson suggest the specific features of applicant's claims, nor do they suggest the combination using an interference fit, particularly with the significant advantages that result therefrom.

Thus, in view of the amendments presented herein and the foregoing detailed discussion, applicant courteously submits that all claims define patentably over the references. Favorable consideration is solicited.

The examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if there are any questions.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: November 21, 2007